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ABSTRACT

Restructuring of Kentucky's public schools is required if poor and minority children are to be included in school reform. The responsibility for creating schools that serve all children falls to both the state and local school districts. A state level initiative must be combined with local district effort. This report provides recommendations for correcting the problems faced by poor and minority students that were identified and discussed in three previous studies. Major recommendations include the following: (1) schools must improve the connection between the home and school environments; (2) schools must adopt a philosophy that all children can learn, that schools can serve all children, and that public schools are responsible for educating all children; (3) state government should require local schools to collect and report information to determine the quality of education provided poor and minority children; (4) tracking and ability grouping must be eliminated; (5) authoritarian school discipline, such as corporal punishment and suspension, must be eliminated; and (6) it is the state's right and responsibility to require accountability of local school districts to ensure that public funds are used to provide quality education. A bibliography is included. The appendices include the following: (1) a list of Resources for Alternatives to Tracking and Rigid Ability Grouping; (2) a list of Resources for Disciplinary Alternatives; and (3) a copy of Kentucky's Annual Performance Report for Local School Districts. (FMW)

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SCHOOLS FOR ALL CHILDREN

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Recommendations for Including Kentucky's Poor and Minority Children in School Reform

A Report By

KENTUCKY YOUTH ADVOCATES (KYA), INC.

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SCHOOLS FOR ALL CHILDREN:

Recommendations for Including Kentucky's Poor and Minority Children in School Reform

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i-vii
PREFACE	
The History of KYA's Advocacy for Children and Families	1
The Fourth in a Series of KYA Education Reports	1
The Purpose of This Report	2
The Timing of This Report	3
SCHOOL SUCCESS, SCHOOL FAILURE	
A Critical Partnership: The Home and The School	5
The School Environment	5
The Home Environment	6
The Home-School Connection	7
CREATING SCHOOLS FOR ALL CHILDREN	
Targeting Poor and Minority Children	10
Correcting Equity Problems	11
ELIMINATING TRACKING AND RIGID ABILITY GROUPING	
A Definition of Tracking and Rigid Ability Grouping	13
The Problem: "Structuring Inequality"	14
The Solutions: Alternatives to Tracking and Rigid Ability Grouping	17
ELIMINATING RIGID, AUTHORITARIAN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE	
The Problem: "Might Makes Right"	21
The Solutions: Discipline to Teach, Not to Hurt	23
ACCOUNTABILITY	
The State's Responsibility	26
Oversight of Local School Districts	29
The Local District's Responsibilities	30
Collecting and Analyze Data	30
Analyzeing School Policies, Programs and Practices	32
RECOMMENDATIONS	
State Level	34
Local School District Level	35
CONCLUSIONS	36
BIBLIOGRAPHY	37

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Resources for Alternatives to Tracking and Rigid Ability Grouping 39

Appendix II: Resources for Disciplinary Alternatives 42

Appendix III: Kentucky's Annual Performance Report for Local School Districts 45

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Why We Wrote This Report

Kentucky is standing at a crossroads with respect to educational reform. Should we continue public education as usual or challenge ourselves by being bold and taking risks? In our judgement, the public is calling for something very different in how children are educated.

In Kentucky Youth Advocates' full report, we challenge all those interested in improving Kentucky schools to participate in the "second wave" of educational reform. This second wave of reform concentrates on educating the children with whom schools have traditionally fared the worst: poor and minority youth.

Kentucky Youth Advocates, Inc. (KYA), a public interest organization which represents poor children and their families in the policy-making process, prepared this report to continue the dialogue on how our public schools can be restructured to serve ALL children. Three prior KYA reports discussed the problems that poor and minority children were encountering in our public schools. This report provides concrete suggestions for local and state education reformers

on how to incorporate these children more successfully into our public schools.

The Role of State Government

We believe that state government can play a powerful role in creating incentives for local schools to develop wholly different ways of educating our poor and minority children. The most crucial step in the second wave of school reform is for Kentucky's decision-makers to accept the proposition that the public school experience *is* very different for poor and minority children than for white and non-poor children. Then, they must commit to improving that experience. So, in order for educational leaders to affect meaningful restructuring of schools they must let go of the past and look for better ways of educating *all* children in the future.

SCHOOL SUCCESS, SCHOOL FAILURE

The Home-School Connection

The dialogue on school reform often ignores poor and minority children. When it does not ignore these children, it tends to make blanket assumptions about them. Our report does neither. All too often, we hear from educators that these children come to school too unprepared to be educated.

This simply is not true--not all poor and minority children are destined to be poor achievers. However, it is also true that some children do come to school with certain disadvantages. For those children, the very first assumption of our work is that schools can play an instrumental role in helping children "catch-up" to their peers. We believe that schools can provide much of the encouragement that children so desperately need to be successful in the classroom--and later in life as well.

Low Expectations: A Damaging Assumption

To put it more bluntly, we believe that schools may cause school failure if educators have low expectations for the achievement of poor and minority children. Schools must adopt a philosophy which includes the following beliefs: (1) all children can learn, (2) schools can serve all children well, and (3) public schools, by definition, are responsible for educating all children.

RESTRUCTURING SCHOOLS

Data Collection: A Boring, But Necessary Function

We believe state government should require local schools to collect and report information which can be used to determine how well poor and minority children are being educated. As long as this information goes uncollected, public schools will remain immune from public accountability.

Eliminate "Tracking" and Rigid Ability Grouping

Children are often grouped together by educators according to their perceived abilities because it is administratively convenient to do so. Our full report describes some of the assumptions upon which ability grouping and tracking are based. But these assumptions have recently been challenged by education reformers. Additionally, these grouping practices have been proven to have negative effects on the social and educational development of the children placed in the "low" or "regular" tracks. Because children develop at different rates, some children may be "stuck" in low ability groups where they often are unchallenged, or in other cases are stigmatized. Both of these practices send powerful messages to children about their value compared to other children.

Our full report outlines some alternatives to rigid ability grouping and tracking. "Cooperative Learning," for example, allows children of all abilities to learn together and to be successful. Our full report includes five other ways to educate all children without the use of rigid ability grouping.

Eliminate Rigid, Authoritarian School Discipline

Currently discipline in most Kentucky schools is geared to the convenience of educators. No one disputes that schools need to be safe places where all children can learn

and develop a sense of self-worth and citizenship. A wide range of school discipline practices exist which can shape the behavior of children. Effective discipline relies heavily on prevention measures so that serious discipline problems are avoided and punishments used rarely. In Kentucky, however, punishment is used frequently. Although data is not collected by the Kentucky Department of Education, information collected by the federal government indicates that Kentucky children were corporally punished (paddled) nearly 30,000 times in the 1985-86 school year--twice the national rate. Black children are corporally punished nearly one and a half times as often as white children.

For older children, suspension from school remains a frequent disciplinary practice. Suspension was used over 19,000 times in the 1985-86 school year. Minority children were suspended at a rate two times that of white children.

Punishments like these send powerful messages to children affecting the way in which these children perceive themselves and others. Our full report provides more than a half dozen alternatives to the disciplinary practices we currently hold so near and dear.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Because we believe that accountability is such an important issue for school reform, we devote a whole section of our report to the state's right and responsibility to assure that public funds are used to provide all children with a quality education regardless of their race or socio-economic background. Although the political principle of "local control" of education is a popular one here in Kentucky, we believe that the state should balance that theme with the principle of accountability. A balance of these two principles will, we think, breed a new confidence in our public schools to which the public will favorably respond.

We repeat our call for the state to mandate that local schools provide information on educational outcomes by race and income level of the student. We also outline some rewards which state government can provide to local schools as incentives for improving their school's performance with these children at risk of school failure. We provide some suggestions for the type of data which local schools should collect to assure public accountability.

In order to assure the public, the media, and Kentucky's decision-makers that state tax monies are being wisely spent, our report calls for a more aggressive role for the Kentucky Board of Education and the Kentucky Department of Education.

We outline some of the functions which both of these public institutions must assume in order to guarantee that the second wave of educational reform will be a success. We also borrow from a National Governor's Association report which suggests some initiatives which states can undertake to assist local schools in their efforts. After all, it is at the local level that poor and minority children will either be served well or be failed.

CONCLUSION

In order for poor and minority children to be included in the second wave of school reform, dramatic restructuring of our state's schools must occur. The recommendations we include in our full report are a beginning in the process of including ALL children in the move toward educational excellence in Kentucky. Schools must have confidence that ALL students can learn and then assure that they are provided that opportunity. Then the public can be confident that schools are performing as we expect - and as we pay for them to perform.

PREFACE

The History of KYA's Advocacy for Children and Families

Historically, Kentucky Youth Advocates (KYA), Inc. has represented the interests of children in the foster care, mental health, and juvenile justice systems. However, we have become increasingly aware that the children for whom KYA traditionally advocates are the same children who experience difficulties in Kentucky's public schools. Often labeled as "slow learners" or "discipline problems," they are unlikely to graduate from high school. As a result, three years ago, KYA moved into the area of education reform as a logical extension of our previous child advocacy.

The Fourth in a Series of KYA Education Reports

This is the fourth in a series of reports KYA has written on the issue of educating children who experience difficulties in our public schools. More often than not these children, frequently called "at risk," are from poor families or are members of minority groups. The first two reports were prepared because we believed--and continue to believe--that the educational needs of these children at risk are being ignored in the flurry of national and state education reform efforts. Our Children at Risk: The Crisis in Public Education, a report we published in 1984, outlined the preliminary issues of inequity in our public schools (Miller, 1984). Kentucky's Children at Risk: The Inequities in Public Education, a report we also published in 1984, summarized the problems identified at a statewide public hearing about the education of these children at risk

(Miller, 1984). Unsatisfactory Performance: A Report Card on Kentucky's School Reform Efforts for Children at Risk, a report we published early in 1987, evaluated the degree to which Kentucky's recent educational reform efforts will benefit the increasing number of children at risk in our public schools (Tuley, 1987).

In response to the many requests for specific information which we received after the publication of our Unsatisfactory Performance report, we have prepared this fourth report. Schools For All Children: Recommendations for Including Kentucky's Poor and Minority Children in School Reform provides more specific suggestions and resources for restructuring schools in two important areas: grouping of children for instructional purposes and school discipline.

The Purpose of This Report

Local, state, and national data indicate that poor and minority children, as a group, are less successful in school than are non-poor and white children. Specifically, aggregate data show that poor and minority children score lower on achievement tests, are retained at grade level at a higher rate, and are less likely to graduate from high school than non-poor and white children (Hodgkinson, 1985). A few schools, however, can boast of equal success with all children regardless of racial or economic background. In this report we will explore why most schools are not successful with poor and minority children. We will also

propose recommendations for making schools more responsive to all children.

The Timing of This Report

We decided to prepare this report for two reasons. First this report focuses on specific recommendations for change which is a natural follow up to KYA's previous education report, Unsatisfactory Performance. Secondly, during the 1987 gubernatorial campaign and the 1988 Kentucky General Assembly, a slightly different dialogue emerged about how best to reform our state's schools. Governor Wallace Wilkinson proposed a reform plan that primarily focused on changing the way in which children are taught in our schools and classrooms. We believe Governor Wilkinson's plan, in general, has merit--though in and of itself does not constitute the total education reform needed in Kentucky. The recommendations in this KYA report also do not constitute total education reform. Rather, this report provides some specific recommendations for how student instruction and school discipline must change to effectively reach all children. These recommendations are offered as examples of the fundamental changes which must take place if schools are to be effective with all children.

As this report was going to press, a landmark court decision was handed down in Kentucky. Franklin Circuit Judge Ray Corns ruled that Kentucky's system of financing public schools is "unconstitutional and discriminates against poor school districts." While Judge Corns has not at this printing issued his final order, it appears that sweeping

changes are about to take place in the financing of Kentucky's public schools. Changes may also take place in the role of the state to hold local districts accountable for the spending of money. The public wants to be assured that the money it invests in education is well spent and that politics and nepotism are taken out of local school governance.

KYA believes that spending must be equitable, not only across all districts in Kentucky, but among all children in Kentucky. We also believe that the state of Kentucky must hold local districts accountable for not only the efficient spending of state money, but the education of each child. This report offers some recommendations for adding these equity issues to the state's accountability system.

We prepared this report as a resource for Kentucky's decision-makers, at both the state and local level, who will determine if and what school reform will take place. We believe that Kentucky's public schools must first and foremost address the educational needs of children at risk who now comprise at least 40% of our students (Tuley, 1987). Further, we believe that because of what we have called the "trickle up" theory, no child will suffer because of reforms put into place for at-risk children (Tuley, 1987). These reform initiatives have been identified as good basic educational practices and will benefit all students.

A Critical Partnership: The Home and The School

Success or failure in school depends on two important aspects of children's lives: the school environment in which they are educated and the home environment in which they live. Few children have any control over either environment. Without support and nurturance from both home and school and without the active partnership of both, success is unlikely regardless of the child's motivation. In this section of our report we discuss the impact of the school and home environments on the student. We also emphasize the critical importance of the home-school partnership to the educational process.

The School Environment

By "school environment" we mean all school policies, programs, practices, as well as the attitudes of the adults in the school. The school environment plays a large role in determining the success or failure of each child. Schools with a positive school environment are led by a principal and staff who believe: (1) all children can learn, (2) all children should receive equitable treatment and equal access to quality programs, and (3) all adults should show (and therefore teach by modeling) respect for each and every child in the school. When the actions of educators reflect these beliefs, all children will have an equal opportunity to learn. Schools without a positive environment, however, tend to experience success with only **some** children--usually only non-poor and white children. That is, the school environment

itself actually **creates educational failure for poor and minority children.**

Low expectations and negative attitudes often prevent poor and minority children from receiving a quality education. For example, some schools inappropriately place large numbers of poor and minority children in "low-ability" classes and in special education classes. These schools fail to challenge **all** children, and in fact **limit** some children's exposure to learning and, therefore, limit their **potential** (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985). Other schools may create failure by disciplining poor and minority children harshly and disproportionately, thus sending these youngsters the message they are not wanted. (National Coalition for Advocates for Students, 1985; First and Mizel, editors, 1980; School Suspensions, 1975; Miller, 1984). Schools can create failure by making the school experience different for black and white children and for poor children and non-poor children. **It is ironic that the very institution charged with the education and enlightenment of society's children often becomes the major force in limiting the potential of large numbers of children.**

The Home Environment

Many schools blame failure exclusively on the parents or on the home environment. Clearly, there **are** children who come from homes so burdened by poverty that their parents are unable to provide for the basic needs of the child: food,

clothing, shelter, and security. There also are children who come from families so dysfunctional that they are not receiving, and may never have received, proper parenting. Obviously, some level of support is needed from the home for children to experience success in school. However, in cases when home support is not present or is minimal, the schools can provide extra support to assist the child and enhance his education. For example, school personnel can provide much of the encouragement and nurturing that children so desperately need to be successful in school. Additionally, schools can provide support services, such as tutoring and counseling, or refer the child and his family to needed community services.

With disastrous consequences, teachers and administrators often assume that all poor and minority children come to school educationally disadvantaged. In fact, most poor and minority children come to school well prepared to learn and keep pace with their peers, only to find that less is expected of them. In many cases, they are never given the opportunity to show that they are just as capable as other children. Additionally, poor parents often see education as a way out of poverty for their children. Far from being disinterested, they want to help and encourage their children in any way they can. Schools do a disservice to these parents by assuming that they will not be involved in their children's education.

The Home-School Connection

Almost everyone agrees that one of the most important ingredients to a child's success in school is the involvement

of his parent(s). Yet, one of the most common complaints from educators is that parents are not "interested" in their children's education (Goodlad, 1984; Miller, 1984). At the same time, one of the most common complaints from parents is that educators "lock them out" of the decision-making process in developing educational programs which affect their children (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Miller, 1984; Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, 1986). Each points the finger at the other, and the gap between home and school remains.

Poor and minority parents and children are disproportionately affected by poor home-school communication. (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Miller, 1984; Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, 1986). School personnel are less likely to contact poor or minority parents than other parents. If school personnel do contact a parent, that contact is likely to be in writing. Parents who are illiterate will not be able to respond to the communication, and are likely to be too embarrassed to admit that they cannot read a note from school. With Kentucky's high illiteracy rate, contact with parents is a particular problem in our state's schools. Poor and minority parents are more likely to feel alienated and unwelcome and are less likely to initiate contact with the school than are other parents (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Miller, 1984; Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, 1986); Lefkowitz, 1987). Additionally, among

poor parents, transportation problems, no telephones and low-wage jobs that do not allow time for teacher conferences often act as barriers to communication but do not necessarily reflect a lack of interest in a child's education. Unfortunately, educators often misinterpret the reactions of parents in these situations.

In recognition of these barriers to communication, many schools have started to reach out to parents and to the community at large. Such initiatives as volunteer parent tutoring programs, school councils composed of educators, parents and community members, and evening hours for parent-teacher conferences have proven successful in restoring trust and building a working relationship among educators, parents and community members. In doing so, schools must reach out especially to poor and minority parents if they are to be successful in educating all children. Schools must accept the responsibility for changing the impression many parents have that schools "don't want us." Additionally, if schools are to solicit the support of parents--all parents--they must also open the decision-making process, allowing parents <u>meaningful</u> participation in the schooling of their children.

CREATING SCHOOLS FOR ALL CHILDREN

> "The great harm they (physicians) did was inadvertent, due to lack of knowledge, but it's accurate to say that many patients were harmed as a result of what were then standard medical procedures.
>
> If schools are to be greatly improved, we need to look closely at things we do regularly which are part of our standard procedures. We need to ask whether, in the things we regularly do in schools, there are educational counterparts to the harm done by medicine before hands and instruments were sterilized and bleeding was abandoned."
>
> Albert Shanker, President
> American Federation of Teachers

Targeting Poor and Minority Children

As stated in KYA's 1987 education report, Unsatisfactory Performance, Kentucky's public schools are failing nearly half of the students who enter their doors. To dramatically improve the outcome for Kentucky's public school students, and therefore the educational level of Kentucky's citizens, schools must be restructured. This restructuring of schools must focus on improving the education provided to poor and minority children. By restructuring, we mean making significant changes in the mission, philosophy, goals, policies, and practices of public schools. Restructuring Kentucky's public schools will require action at the state and local school district level aimed at improving the education of poor and minority children in classrooms across the state.

Correcting Equity Problems

There are three basic steps to correcting the equity problems in schools described in the previous section. The three steps schools must follow are:

* identify policies, programs, and practices that may create a learning disadvantage for poor and minority children,
* search for new and better ways of educating children, and
* replace offending policies, programs, and practices.

The most effective way to identify equity problems is to collect and analyze data by race and by poverty level. Unfortunately, the Kentucky Department of Education does not require that such data be collected nor do the local school districts voluntarily collect it. The resulting accountability problem, and the importance of resolving it, will be discussed in another section of this report.

Important statistics are, however, collected by the United States Department of Education. They reveal that many equity problems exist in Kentucky public schools. Two of the most critical are:

* disproportionate placement of minority children in special education classes, low ability groups, slow or non-college track classes, and vocational education classes and
* disproportionate use of suspensions and corporal punishment among minority students.

For purposes of brevity, we will focus only on these two problems, though others exist. We chose these two problems because:

* They exist in almost every school,

* There is a vast amount of information available to assist schools in correcting them, and

* The solutions illustrate **key elements in restructuring schools to better meet the educational needs of <u>all</u> children**, but especially those of poor and minority students who are at risk of school failure.

These two critical equity problems point to two needed school reform measures: (1) eliminating tracking and rigid ability grouping and (2) eliminating rigid, authoritarian school discipline.

> How many of us, if asked to organize an office, would so arrange things that people worked for eight or nine bosses in a week, in perhaps five different work groups, in seven different rooms, without any desk or chair to call their own to put their belongings and were discouraged, if not prohibited, from talking to anyone while working? How much work would get done under these conditions? But that's exactly how most schools operate.
>
> Charles Handy
> author of <u>The Future of Work</u>

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ELIMINATING TRACKING AND RIGID ABILITY GROUPING

A Definition of Tracking and Rigid Ability Grouping

Most elementary and secondary schools group students for instructional purposes. Some methods of grouping assist and promote instruction. Other methods, however, interfere with instruction and are destructive to children's self esteem. "Tracking" and "rigid ability grouping" are prime examples of destructive grouping methods. Both classify children based on perceived academic abilities as determined by a standardized test, teacher evaluation or both.

The major difference between tracking and rigid ability grouping is the way in which classrooms are organized. When schools utilize tracking, students are grouped by classroom. For example, a school might have entirely separate classrooms for "gifted" students, "college bound" students, "general education" students, or "vocational education" students. It is even common that throughout a day, these students do not have a single class together. Tracking is used most commonly in high schools. In contrast, when schools utilize rigid ability grouping, students are placed in small groups within a heterogeneous classroom ("mixed ability" classroom). These small groups become fixed and segregated from one another. Children remain in the same small group for instruction in most or all subjects. These groups frequently are characterized as the high-achievers, the normal or average children, and the slow learners. Rigid ability grouping is used most often in elementary schools.

The instruction provided to children in a given track or ability group is based on the teacher's notion of what the children can "handle." Very often the stated goals, the materials, the method of teaching, and the quality of the education differ among the various tracks or groups. (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985). For example, in at least one Kentucky school district teachers of "advanced program" classes receive more money per pupil for classroom supplies than do teachers of "regular program" classes. Thus, it is no mystery why children in various tracks perform at different levels or rates. Tracking and rigid ability grouping label children as "gifted," "regular," or "slow." These labels become self-fulfilling prophecies.

The Problem: "Structuring Inequality"

In her 1985 book, Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality, Jeannie Oaks states that tracking is "a practice that seems to limit schools' attempts to be either equitable or excellent." Tracking and rigid ability grouping are based on several assumptions which have been challenged repeatedly in recent years (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1986). Contrary to the assumptions upon which tracking and rigid ability grouping are based, new evidence suggests that:

* Students do not learn better when grouped with other students "like" themselves,
* "Slow-learning" students do not develop a positive self-image when labeled and grouped with other "slow-learning" students,

* An educator or group of educators cannot determine, based on test scores or other data, the potential of a child,

* A child's current academic achievement may not be a good predictor of future achievement,

* Teachers are not necessarily more effective when teaching a group of children perceived to be similar in ability (Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1986).

Additionally, tracking and ability grouping have come under fire from education reformers and student advocates alike because of the inherent inequities in the practices (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985). Poor and minority children are tracked disproportionately into low ability groups (Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1986). These children rarely get the chance to move out of the low track, often are unchallenged, and develop feelings of unimportance. As Jeannie Oakes states, "Tracking thus both reflects the class and racial inequities of the larger society and helps to perpetuate them" (Oakes, 1985).

Tracking and rigid ability grouping foster resentment between and among children in various tracks and send powerful messages to children about their relative value. As one college professor said, "A child knows if he is a red bird, a blue bird or a buzzard" (Dr. Stanley Mour, University of Louisville). In fact, research over the past forty years has shown overwhelmingly that tracking and rigid ability grouping are not sound educational practices and that they do not benefit any child. Further, studies show that children placed in the "low" and "regular" tracks and ability groups

are hurt psychologically and educationally by these practices (Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1986). In a series of reports released in 1987, the National Research Council's Mathematical Sciences Education Board found that American elementary and secondary school students' mathematical ability ranks "among the lowest of any industrialized country." One of the main causes of this low ranking, the reports said, is the "practice of placing students in courses by ability (which) condemns many to classes in which low expectations become self-fulfilling prophecies" (The Courier-Journal, 1987).

In contrast, advocates of gifted programs often fear that the elimination of tracking will mean "watering-down" the school curriculum for their children. Indeed, this has happened in some schools. Research shows, however, that teaching children in "mixed" classes does not have to mean lowering the quality of education for any child. In fact, research shows that children placed in the advanced track perform just as well when placed in a **quality** heterogeneous or regular program. Children traditionally placed in a "slow" track perform **better** when placed in a **quality** heterogeneous or regular class (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1986). The evidence is overwhelming. The goal is clear: eliminate tracking and rigid ability grouping and redirect school resources and educators' skills toward improving the quality of education for all children.

However, despite the overwhelming evidence against the

use of tracking and rigid ability grouping, these practices are used in some form almost universally in elementary and secondary schools across the country and in Kentucky (Oakes, 1985). **Critics believe that tracking and rigid ability grouping continue to be used in part because of their administrative convenience to teachers and principals** (Oakes, 1985). Others suggest that some educators continue to believe, contrary to research findings, that tracking and rigid ability grouping are effective practices (Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1986). Whether intentional or not, it is clear that tracking and rigid ability grouping result in the resegregation of our public schools by segregating children in classrooms according to their race and income level (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Oakes, 1985).

The Solutions: Alternatives to Tracking and Rigid Ability Grouping

Alternatives to the use of tracking and rigid ability grouping can be found in model programs throughout the country and in the professional literature on effective teaching practices. Alternatives listed in this report can be divided into two different categories:

* Ways in which teachers can vary the teaching method or approach to met individual educational needs. These alternative teaching approaches can be used with large or small groups of children or with individual children.

* Ways in which teachers can use small group instruction, without the pitfalls of rigid ability grouping, to vary the content of the curriculum, the pace of instruction, or the method of teaching.

All alternatives listed in this report can be and are more effective if used in conjunction with one another.

Small group instruction differs from rigid ability grouping in that it:

* does not label children,
* does not segregate children by race, socio-economic background, or perceived academic ability, and
* does not provide an inferior quality of education to any child.

Small group instruction also allows for cross-grade and cross-age grouping. This means temporarily placing together children of different ages or grade levels in small groups for specific instructional purposes.

According to a recent publication by the United States Department of Education, instructional grouping plans most apt to boost student achievement share the following characteristics:

* Students are placed primarily in heterogeneous classrooms ("mixed" classrooms), but may be temporarily placed in small groups for instruction in specific skill areas in one or two subjects, such as reading or mathematics;
* Instruction is based on a student's performance in the specific skill being taught, rather than on an intelligence quotient (I.Q.) or achievement test score;
* Instruction and group placement recognize that children perform at different levels in different skill areas (United States Department of Education, undated).

The following is a partial list and a brief description of alternatives to tracking and rigid ability grouping:

Small Group Instruction for Specific Skills: Small group instruction is used within a heterogeneous, or "mixed", classroom. Children are temporarily placed in small groups for instruction in a specific skill. Care must be taken to ensure that the above-mentioned criteria are met and that small groups do not become rigid ability groups.

The Joplin Plan (cross-grade re-grouping): The Joplin Plan is an organizational plan for teaching reading. Students are assigned to a heterogeneous, self-contained classroom for most of the day, but are re-grouped across grade levels for reading. Again, to avoid some of the pitfalls of grouping, student placement must be based on performance in the skill area being taught. Therefore, students may be in different small reading groups at different times of the school year, depending on the skill being taught and the student's performance in that skill area. Research shows that the Joplin Plan is highly effective in teaching reading.

Nongraded Plans: A nongraded plan groups students according to their performance in specific skills, rather than their age. Usually, the curriculum is divided into levels through which the students progress at their own pace. Nongraded plans stress individualized instruction, but also may utilize small groups and various teaching methods and approaches, such as those outlined in this report. Research on this type of plan show positive results in academic achievement (United States Department of Education, undated).

Cooperative Learning: Cooperative learning is a method of instruction in which "students of all performance levels work together in small groups toward a group goal" (Slavin, 1987). Thus cooperation and the success of all students is emphasized rather than competition and the success of only some students. Research shows that cooperative learning not only increases achievement levels of students, but also improves problem-solving behaviors, creates positive intergroup relations, increases self-esteem, increases students' acceptance of one another's individual differences, fosters a positive attitude toward school, develops peer norms in favor of doing well academically, and gives students a feeling of control over their own fate in school (Slavin, 1987).

Individualized Instruction: Individualized instruction is a planned program of instruction for an individual student, with the teacher providing one-on-one attention to help the student progress through the goals of the

program. Individualized instruction involves assessing the child's performance in specific skills, placing the child in a pre-designed program at the point at which the assessment shows is appropriate, or custom designing a program for the child based on the assessment. A child then moves through the program at his own pace. Some individualized programs also allow for children to have input into which skills within a subject they will study on a given day. Individualized instruction is proven effective if used in moderation. However, a total program of individualized instruction would leave children bored, isolated, and without the positive effects of socializing with peers.

Peer Tutoring: Peer tutoring involves students in helping one another. The teacher instructs a specific student to help another student or students in an assigned lesson. Peer tutoring has been shown to be effective not only in improving student learning, but in [illegible]ting student self-esteem, student cooperation, and [illegible]dent responsibility for both the students tutored and [illegible]tudents who provide the tutoring (Levin, 1984; Slavin, 1986).

Please see Appendix I for a list of resources for obtaining additional information on these and other alternatives to tracking and rigid ability grouping.

> Tracking has long been abused and misused. And misdiagnosis is rampant.... The result, research suggests, is that tracking is now not so much a response to the differences among students as a cause of those differences.
>
> Mary Hatwood Futrell, President
> National Education Association
> "An Educator's Opinion: The Alternative to Tracking," The Washington Post National Weekly Edition, January 18-24, 1988

ELIMINATING RIGID, AUTHORITARIAN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

The Problem: "Might Makes Right"

Effective school discipline is a method schools use to develop character, self-esteem, self-control, a sense of responsibility, and independence among students. Effective school discipline also creates a positive school climate in which children can learn and teachers can teach. Effective school discipline can be viewed as a continuum with preventive measures, such as positive reinforcement, at one end of the continuum and punishment, such as detention, at the other end. Unlike many people believe, "discipline" and "punishment" are not interchangeable terms. Ideally, punishment is used infrequently because the preventive measures and other less severe interventions used by school personnel effectively avert most serious student behavior problems.

Unfortunately, school discipline in Kentucky is far from the ideal. Discipline in Kentucky schools tends to be authoritarian, punitive, and even violent. Large numbers of students are suspended from school and corporally punished. Apparently, many Kentucky educators believe that the only school discipline is punishment. They fail to utilize disciplinary practices at the preventive end of the discipline continuum. Additionally, discipline is often administered in a discriminatory way, with the most severe punishments--corporal punishment and suspension--falling more

heavily on poor and minority children than other children.

Local schools do not voluntarily collect, and the Kentucky Department of Education does not require, adequate data to thoroughly analyze disciplinary practices in Kentucky. However, some data on discipline in Kentucky schools are available through the United States Department of Education. These data show that:

* Kentucky children were corporally punished or "paddled" approximately 30,000 times during the 1985-86 school year, or at nearly two times the national rate,

* Black children in Kentucky were corporally punished at a rate 1.5 times that of white children,

* Kentucky children were suspended over 19,000 times during the 1985-86 school year. According to a Kentucky Department of Education survey, in all grades elementary through high school, the most common reason for school suspension is "defiance of authority." The second most common reason for suspension is "profanity and vulgarity" in elementary, middle and junior high schools and "chronic tardiness" in high schools (Kentucky Department of Education, undated), and

* Black children in Kentucky are suspended at twice the rate of white children.

Clearly, Kentucky educators are over-using punishment as a disciplinary technique. Children's behavior can be shaped without resorting to punishment. In fact, a large body of research indicates that punishment is not the most effective method for achieving lasting behavior change. (First, 1980; National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985; Kaeser, 1979; National School Boards Association, 1984). Other more effective techniques are designed to foster self-esteem and create individual responsibility in each student. School discipline practices--the way in which adults attempt to shape student behavior--send powerful messages to children,

affecting the way in which children perceive themselves and others. Schools cannot be successful learning institutions if discipline policies and practices are ineffective and damage children's self-esteem.

The Solutions: Discipline To Teach, Not to Hurt

Our review of the professional literature on school discipline indicates that there are many effective, non-violent discipline techniques, all of which share certain characteristics. Appropriate discipline techniques do the following:

* preserve and build self-esteem among children and teachers,
* are not seen as an annoying distraction from education, but a crucial part of teaching,
* teach acceptable behavior rather than simply punish bad behavior,
* foster positive relationships between child and adult,
* recognize that feelings are legitimate, but the behavior may be inappropriate. For example, feeling anger is appropriate, but cursing or hitting is not,
* use natural consequences whenever possible. For example, if a child destroys a textbook, the natural consequence is that the book must be replaced by the child. No other consequence is needed,
* are not costly, extravagant, or difficult to implement,
* use as few rules as possible,
* develop, often with student help, rules that are (1) clear to everyone involved (including teachers, students, parents), (2) believed to be fair, (3) perceived to be fairly applied, and (4) focused on important issues and behaviors, rather than on matters irrelevant to education and which ultimately create unnecessary distractions for children and

educators,

* do not use out-of-school suspensions for class cutting, tardiness or truancy. These behaviors often result from limited student motivation. More appropriate disciplinary actions include special support services to the family, in-school alternative to suspension with counseling and assistance for the student, and total curriculum re-design for the student,

* combine respect for children and firmness in administering discipline,

* have a high expectation for parent involvement that includes welcoming parents to the school, frequent communication with parents, and asking parents for help in solving problems rather than blaming them for the problem, and

* seek input and assistance from the community, especially community professionals who could help directly with discipline problems (Keaser, 1979).

Listed below are a few of the many disciplinary techniques which are designed to shape student behavior without excessive use of punishment:

Positive Reinforcement: Positive reinforcement involves the teacher in rewarding desired behavior and--as much as is possible--ignoring undesired behavior. The theory is that children repeat behavior for which they get attention, especially positive attention.

Behavior Contracts: Behavior contracting first requires a discussion between the student and the teacher or principal to clarify the "problem." A contract is then written between the student and teacher or principal (the parent may also be involved) in which each party agrees to certain goals or changes in behavior.

Teacher/Student Conference: Teacher/student conferences provide both child and adult with an opportunity to talk about the "problem" in private and usually after some time has passed since the incident. It allows the teacher an opportunity to listen to the student and can serve to build a positive adult/child relationship.

Peer Counseling: Peer counseling allows students to help one another and to help themselves. This strategy involves students' working together in groups. Students receive special training in problem-solving skills, leadership and understanding themselves and their environment.

Conflict Resolution/Mediation: Conflict resolution programs usually train selected students in problem solving, assertiveness, listening, and leadership skills. These trained students provide assistance to disputing students, often preventing the necessity for serious disciplinary actions. Students may seek out or can be referred to a trained "conflict mediator," instead of relying on adults to settle all problems.

Alternative Programs/Schools: Alternative programs or schools are an extreme measure used to meet the individual needs of the few students who are unable to function successfully in the "regular" program. It is important for a school to first assure that they are offering an adequately flexible regular school program, before resorting to alternative programs. Alternative programs or schools offer the "non-traditional" student an education designed to meet specific needs. For example, the alternative program may offer courses at other than traditional hours or may offer smaller classes. Alternative programs are not sources of punishment; they are alternative ways of educating children.

Please see Appendix II for resource information on these and other disciplinary techniques.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The State's Responsibility

During the 1986-87 school year, Kentucky's public schools received approximately 69 percent of their total revenue from state funds (Kentucky Education Association, 1987). The Commonwealth of Kentucky has at least a moral responsibility to assure that these public funds are used to provide all children with a quality education regardless of race or income level.

A recent Kentucky court ruling suggests that Kentucky has more than a moral responsibility. In May 1988, Franklin Circuit Judge Ray Corns ruled that Kentucky's system of financing public education was "unconstitutional and discriminatory to poor school districts." The ruling, while not yet final, also suggests that the state may have a larger role in holding the local schools accountable for the efficient spending of state money. We would suggest that the state also has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that state money is spent equitably among all children within each district. Additionally, we believe the state has a statutory responsibility to hold local school districts accountable for the education of each child. The two entities within the executive branch of Kentucky state government to which this responsibility falls are: the Kentucky State Board of Education (The Board) and the Kentucky Department of Education (The Department).

The Board sets education policy and promulgates administrative regulations needed to implement laws passed by the Kentucky General Assembly. The Department then implements state law following the guidelines established by the Board. The Department also monitors all local districts for compliance with state and federal laws and established state standards. This monitoring process is known as the accreditation process. To hold local districts accountable for the education of each child, the accreditation process must include what we call "equity issues." For example, this would include the collection of data on the academic progress of students by race and income level. The recommendations section of this report provides a more extensive list of "equity issues."

If Kentucky schools are to be equitable, the Kentucky State Board of Education must enact policies and administrative regulations that require the fair and equitable treatment of all children. If all Kentucky children are to receive a quality education, the Kentucky Department of Education must conduct the following activities:

* Collect adequate data, by race and income level of the student,
* Evaluate school programs and practices, based on data collected and current educational research,
* Prepare research reports and reviews of the professional literature to keep local districts abreast of the emerging trends in education,

* Provide technical assistance to local district administrators and educators who need help in solving identified problems, and

* Provide incentive grants to local districts to implement effective and equitable education programs.

The concept that the state bears the responsibility for ensuring the education of all children is gaining momentum. In The 1991 Report on Education, part of a five-year initiative to improve education in the states, the National Governors' Association suggested the following **state initiatives** to assure that children at risk of school failure do not fail:

* Provide extra help in the basic skills (reading, writing, math, and science) by teaching all children regardless of learning style and by adequately funding remedial and compensatory education programs,

* Employ a variety of effective teaching practices in all schools and classrooms,

* Assure the curriculum is challenging for all children and that children who start school behind or fall behind are not permanently tracked into a watered-down curriculum,

* Provide valid and reliable assessment of student performance so students, teachers and parents can work to correct deficiencies,

* Reward schools for making progress in educating all children, including children at risk, and

* Help parents help their children (National Governors' Association, 1986).

Clearly, the National Governors' Association is recognizing the state's responsibility in guaranteeing an equal educational opportunity for children at risk.

Oversight of Local School Districts

The United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has long been monitoring local districts for discriminatory treatment of children in disciplinary actions and instructional grouping. This monitoring set an important precedent in establishing oversight of local school district operations. Unfortunately, the OCR monitoring is woefully inadequate. Monitoring occurs only every other year, and then in only one third of our state's local districts.

Many proponents of "local control" believe that local school districts should have discretion over all aspects of public schooling within their district. Certainly, local districts must have discretion over much of the local school operation, but they also must follow state standards and law, as well as federal law. We believe that local districts must also be required to ensure that each child in their district is provided an equal opportunity to a quality education. A balance must be maintained between local school control and state oversight if all children in Kentucky are to receive the quality education to which they are entitled. Local districts cannot operate in a vacuum. Local school districts are an essential part of a whole state community. If Kentucky is to raise the educational level, and therefore the quality of life of its citizens, the state must be sure that all local school districts participate in the improvement of

schools. Only by adhering to the same set of standards statewide can we be assured of not leaving anyone behind in our quest for educational excellence.

The Local Districts' Responsibilities

Local school districts have a responsibility to each and every child in their districts to provide a positive, meaningful, and adequate educational experience. Specifically, local districts have a responsibility to:

* spend school money efficiently and distribute school money equitably among all children,
* be aware of state-of-the-art techniques in all aspects of teaching and discipline,
* collect adequate student and school data to monitor their own progress in teaching all children,
* make all data collected available to the public, and
* seek parent, community, and student input into decision-making.

Collecting and Analyzing Data

School officials currently look at educational outcomes, at least to some extent, to determine the success of the school. However, few schools analyze--or even collect--the data necessary to determine where the inequities in education exist. To identify inequities, all data on student placement, achievement, retention, and discipline must be collected by race and by income level. By collecting and analyzing data in this way, the differences in the school experience for poor and minority children will become apparent. Only if we identify the differences can we make

changes to ensure a positive, successful school experience for all children.

In Kentucky, all public school districts are required by state law and regulation to collect specific data outlined in the Annual Performance Report reprinted in Appendix III. However, this data is not collected by race or by income level. The problems associated with this omission are evident in the following hypothetical example:

> One local school district in Kentucky reported in its 1987 Annual Performance Report (APR) an overall school dropout rate of 3.5 percent. The Kentucky Department of Education does not consider a rate below 5.5 percent to be a "deficiency" for accreditation purposes. In fact, the Department "target" or acceptable dropout rate is 3.5 percent. By state standards then, this school district does not have a "dropout problem." However, if the dropout data for this school district were collected by race and income level, we might find that the dropout rate for black children is 10 percent, while the dropout rate for white children is 2 percent. We might find that the dropout rate for children below the poverty level is 15 percent and the dropout rate for children above the poverty level is 1 percent. Neither is revealed by looking at the overall dropout rate alone.

In addition to collecting and analyzing all the APR data by race and income level, the following data, also collected by race and income level, are essential to identify school inequities:

* all disciplinary actions, including expulsions, suspensions, corporal punishments, in-school alternatives to suspension, and truancy petitions,
* all school attendance data,

* all tracking or rigid ability grouping placements, including gifted and talented program placements, regular program placements (and "rigid" ability groups within the regular program), special education placements by handicapping condition, vocational education placements, and college preparatory placements, and

* all standardized test scores.

Analyzing School Policies, Programs and Practices

After data has been collected, school policies, programs, and practices must be analyzed to determine what changes are needed to create a more equitable educational program for all children. It is impossible to provide a prescription for all schools to follow, as each school is so different. However, the following examples will provide an idea of the type of analysis which must take place.

Example #1: The 1984-85 United States Department of Education data shows that one school district in Kentucky places black children in classes labeled "educable mentally retarded" (EMR) at two times the rate white children are placed. (On the average, Kentucky schools place black children in EMR classes at two times the rate at which white children are placed. Therefore, this example is representative of the situation in Kentucky schools.) In analyzing school data, this disparity in placement would be identified as discriminatory. Therefore, the policies, programs and practices related to the placement of children in EMR classes in this one district would need evaluation.

Because the EMR category is defined as "mildly mentally retarded" or "borderline mentally retarded," the decision to place a child in an EMR class is based on standardized test scores as well as a great deal of subjective evaluation (such as teacher observation or other educator's observations of the child)--and therefore bias. Research has shown that when children are inappropriately placed in an EMR class, their learning is limited by the constraints of the classroom. Special remedial instruction is needed to bring them up to grade level. Thus, it is very important to the well-being of the child and to the overall performance of the school to accurately place children in this, and all, special education classes.

To rectify the disproportionate placement of black

children in EMR classes, the Kentucky Department of Education could help the local school district examine its identification, assessment, and placement process. The goal of this cooperative effort would be to establish a system that will halt the inappropriate placement of children--especially poor and minority children--into EMR classes.

Example #2: The 1984-85 United States Department of Education data also shows that one school district in Kentucky suspends black children at two times the rate at which white children are suspended. (On the average, Kentucky schools suspend black children at twice the rate at which white children are suspended, therefore the above example is representative of Kentucky schools.) Again this data clearly shows an area of discriminatory treatment. Discriminatory treatment sends a powerful and negative message to black children in the school, causes alienation, fosters feelings of inferiority and perpetuates injustices.

To rectify the disproportionate suspension of black students, an analysis of the discipline referral and suspension policies and practices of the school must be conducted. Are black children being suspended for offenses for which white children are not suspended? Are offenses being defined differently for white children than for black children? For example, if a white child walks through the classroom door just as the bell rings is he considered on time to class, while a black child doing the same thing is considered tardy?

Monitoring and accountability at both the local district and state level are essential to both excellence and equity in education. The following section lists specific recommendations for both state and local district levels to include poor and minority children in education reform.

RECOMMENDATIONS

State Level

We recommend that the Kentucky Department of Education:

* expand the existing Annual Performance Reporting System to require all local school districts to collect and report the following additional data:
  - all disciplinary actions, including expulsions, suspensions, corporal punishments, in-school alternatives to suspension, and truancy petitions,
  - all school attendance data,
  - all tracking or rigid ability grouping placements, including gifted and talented program placements, regular program placements (and "rigid" ability groups within the regular program), special education placements by handicapping condition, vocational education placements, and college preparatory placements, and
  - all standardized test scores.
* require that all data in the Annual Performance Report be collected and reported by race and income level of the child,
* expand current accreditation standards to include such equity issues as:
  - disproportionate placement of poor and minority students in special education and vocational education classes, and in programs of inferior quality.
  - under representation of poor and minority students in gifted and talented programs,
  - segregation of or disproportionate placement of poor and minority students in rigid ability groups,
  - disproportionate number of disciplinary actions against poor and minority students,
  - disproportionate number of poor and minority students retained at grade level,
  - disproportionate number of poor and minority students who are not graduated with their class.

* provide information and technical assistance to local school districts on state-of-the-art teaching methods, disciplinary alternatives, and other areas of educational improvements, especially for poor and minority children, and

* establish model programs and incentive grants to encourage local school districts to adopt improved educational practices, especially to better educate poor and minority children.

Local School District Level

We recommend that all local school districts in Kentucky:

* establish as their primary goal the education of all children, including poor and minority children,

* ensure that all policies and practices reflect the belief that all children including poor and minority children, can learn,

* voluntarily monitor their own performance in educating all children, especially poor and minority children, by collecting and analyzing the data required in the Annual Performance Report, by race and by income level,

* keep abreast of recent trends in education practices, especially instruction and discipline,

* eliminate the use of tracking and rigid ability grouping, by adopting proven instructional alternatives such as those suggested in this report, and

* replace authoritarian, punitive, and verbally and physically abusive discipline practices with those that create independence, responsibility, and foster a positive self-image in children.

CONCLUSIONS

If poor and minority children are to be included in school reform, dramatic restructuring of our state's schools must occur. The responsibility for creating schools that serve all children falls to both the state and the local school districts. A state level initiative, combined with local district effort, is the only way to ensure that some Kentuckians are not left behind as we move Kentucky forward in education.

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APPENDIX I

Resources for Altrnatives to Tracking
and Rigid Ability Grouping

RESOURCES

The following persons and organizations may be of assistance in providing more information or technical assistance on alternatives to tracking and ability grouping:

Center for Law and Education, Inc.
Gutman Library - 6 Appian Way
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dr. Rene Gonzalez or
Dr. Alexander Cuthbert
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
United States Department of Education
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20208

Maureen Hallinan
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556

Kentucky Education Association
401 Capitol Avenue
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dr. Henry M. Levin
Professor of Education
Stanford University
Stanford, California 94305

National Coalition of Advocates for Students
100 Boylston Street, Suite 737
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Jeannie Oakes
The Rand Corporation
Santa Monica, California 90405

Robert E. Slavin, Director
Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools
Johns Hopkins University
3505 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Aage B. Sorenson
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Mrs. Brice Verdier, Information Specialist
Instruction and Professional Development
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Eliot Wigginton
Foxfire Teacher Outreach
Rabun Gap, Georgia 30568

APPENDIX II

Resources for Disciplinary Alternatives

DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVES

RESOURCES

The following persons and organizations may be of assistance in providing more information or technical assistance on disciplinary alternatives:

Ms. Nadine Block, Director
Ohio Center for More Effective School Discipline
750 Brooksedge, Suite 107
Westerville, Ohio 43081

Dr. Forrest Calico, Chairman
Beechwood Board of Education
Beechwood Independent School System
Beechwood Street
Ft. Thomas, Kentucky 41017

Center for Law and Education, Inc.
Gutman Library - 6 Appian Way
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Community Board Center for Policy and Training
School Initiatives Program
149 Ninth Street
San Francisco, California 94103

Ms. Ann Gibson, Executive Director
National Association for Mediation in Education
University of Massachusetts
425 Amity Street
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002

Dr. Irwin A. Hyman, Director
The National Center for the Study of Corporal Punishment
and Alternatives in the Schools
253 Ritter Hall South
Department of School Psychology
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122

Kentucky Education Association
401 Capitol Avenue
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dr. Frederick Lunenburg
Associate Professor
Department of Education
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky 40292

Dr. Adah Maurer
End Violence Against the Next Generation, Inc.
977 Keeler Avenue
Berkeley, California 94708

Mr. J. D. Minnehan, Superintendent
Danville Independent School System
Proctor Street
Danville, Kentucky 40422

National Coalition of Advocates for Students
100 Boylston Street, Suite 737
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

National School Resource Network
5530 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1600
Washington, D.C. 20015

Jordan Riak, Director
Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education
500 South Hartz Avenue, #408
Danville, California 94526

Mrs. Brice Verdier, Information Specialist
Instruction and Professional Development
National Education Association
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

APPENDIX III

Kentucky's Annual Performance Report
for Local School Districts

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Annual Performance Report

1986 - 1987

Kentucky Department of Education
Alice McDonald
Superintendent of Public Instruction

The Kentucky Department of Education provides equal educational and employment opportunities.

-printed with state funds-

Table of Contents

PAGE NUMBER

Certification Page 1

Definitions 3

Introduction 5

Part I — Student Data 5-6
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
ENROLLMENT DATA

Part II — Staff Data 6-7

Part III — Management Data 7

Part IV — Master Educational Improvement Plan 7
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Statistical Tables 9-11

Kentucky Department of Education
Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Annual Performance Report

Fiscal Year 19_____

Legal Name of Local Educational Agency _____ District Number _____

Street Address _____ City or Town _____ Zip Code _____

Superintendent _____ Chairman Local Board of Education _____

I certify that this information is a complete and accurate statement of the performance of this school district on the factors specified in this report.

Signature of Board Chairman _____ Signature of Superintendent _____

Date Signed _____ Date Signed _____

Definitions

Cost Per Pupil for Instruction — Instruction costs are calculated by dividing the total spent for instruction (Line 1 of the Annual Financial Report) by average daily attendance. This excludes Chapter I and IV money. It includes salaries, contractual services, books, periodicals, teaching supplies, audio-visual materials, tests and instructional fees. (See Department of Education publications *Profiles of Kentucky Public Schools* and *Receipts and Expenditures*.)

Cost Per Pupil for Administration — Administration costs are calculated by dividing the total spent for administration (Line H of the Annual Financial Report) by the number of students in average daily attendance. It includes salaries, contractual services, tax collector fees, travel, supplies and printing. (See Department of Education publications *Profiles of Kentucky Public Schools* and *Receipts and Expenditures*.)

Annual Current Expenses Per Pupil — These data are obtained from the Annual Financial Reports and the Superintendent's Annual Statistical Reports. The total current expenses (Line P of the Annual Financial Report) are divided by the ADA to arrive at a per pupil cost. Current expenses include administration, instruction, attendance services, health services, pupil transportation, operation of plant, maintenance of plant, and fixed charges.

Transportation Cost Per Pupil — Cost for transportation is calculated by dividing the cost to and from school by the ADA adjusted for handicapped.

Mean NCE Scores — Normal curve equivalent scores (NCE) divide the scale beneath the normal distribution into 99 equal segments, units, or scores. Scores range from 1-99, with a mean/median of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.

Test of Cognitive Skills (TCS) — The TCS is an ability test designed to assess a student's academic aptitude and thereby predict the student's level of success in school.

Percent Economically Deprived — Economically deprived represents children who are eligible for free school lunch benefits in proportion to total children of school age enrolled in the district.

Dropout Rate — Dropout rate represents the percent of students in grades 7-12 who drop out of school during the school year. It includes withdrawals in attendance accounting codes W6-a pupil who became 16 and dropped out; W10-a pupil discharged; and W11-a pupil excused from school because of marriage.

Revenue from Local Sources — This item illustrates the percent of total revenue from local sources as indicated on the Annual Financial Report (account codes 11-35 and below the line account codes 94.11, 94.21 and 94.31). This total excludes non-revenue receipts in the calculation of the percent of revenue.

Revenue from State Sources — This item includes Annual Financial Report account codes 41-45 and below the line receipts 94.12 and 94.22 of the Annual Financial Report.

Revenue from Federal Sources — This item includes Annual Financial Report account codes 51-53, 61-62 and below the line codes 94.13, 94.23, 94.33, 94.53, 94.24 and 94.34.

Introduction

In 1984, the General Assembly enacted legislation (SB 202), which requires each public school district in the Commonwealth of Kentucky to submit to the State Board of Education an annual performance report. This report must include the district's accomplishments and activities pertaining to but not limited to, retention rates and student performance on basic and essential skills tests by grade level, the district's goals for the succeeding year and other items as may be set forth in State Board of Education regulation. The legislation also requires local boards of education to publish the annual performance report in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the county by October 1 of each year.

In order to comply with the requirements specified in Senate Bill 202, each local board of education must complete this annual performance report and submit a signed copy to the State Board of Education by September 15 of each year.

For organizational purposes the annual performance report has been divided into four parts. Part I contains student data related to academic achievement and enrollment; Part II contains staff data related to teachers, administrators, and support staff; Part III includes school district management data; and Part IV addresses the district's Master Educational Improvement Plan to include a brief summary of the district's goals, activities and/or progress in meeting program and service standards.

Part I
Student Data

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Item 1 — Record the percent of students mastering the essential skills in mathematics, reading spelling, writing and library research reference skills by grade. Include the number and percent of students in each grade who take the test.

Item 2 — Record mean NCE scores for the basic skill areas of reading comprehension, math, spelling, writing and library research reference skills by grade. Report district data to include mean NCE scores for total battery excluding students officially enrolled in special education.

Item 3 — Record district Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) results and American College Board Test (ACT) results. Report state and district data to include the number and percent of eligible students taking the tests.

Item 4 — Record the percent of students retained in each grade 1-12. The percent should be calculated by dividing the number retained in a grade by the end of year enrollment in that grade. Report school and district data.

ENROLLMENT DATA

Item 5—Record the annual number and percent of students leaving school prior to graduation in grades 7-12. Include withdrawals in attendance accounting codes W6, W10 and W11. the dropout rate should be calculated using the following formula (E's-*original entries*, R's-*re-entries*, W's-*withdrawals*):

E's + R's - W's = NET

NET + W6, W10, W11 = Membership + Dropout

Dropout Rate = W6 + W10 + W11 + Membership + Dropout

Report data for the most current three year period. Include district and state data.

Item 6 — Record average daily attendance as a percent of average daily membership. Report school, district and state data for the most current three year period. The percent of attendance is found by dividing the aggregate days attendance by aggregate days membership (grades 1-12).

Item 7 — Record the number and percent of high school graduates going to college or participating in postsecondary training. Report district and state data for the most current three-year period. This data is derived from the school data form and includes all students graduating in the spring plus students graduating before the start of the next school year. This information is summarized in the Department of Education publication titled *Holding Power and Graduates*.

Item 8 — Record the number and percent of students enrolled in special education within the district, the number and percent of special education students returned to regular classroom status during the year just past. Report district and state data for the most current three-year period.

Item 9 — Record the number and percent of district enrollment classified as economically deprived children. Report district and state data for the most current three year period. This would include children eligible for free school lunch benefits in proportion to total children of school age in the district. (Data is included in *Profiles of Kentucky Public Schools*)

Item 10 — Record the number and percent of secondary students enrolled in vocational education to include students enrolled in occupational preparatory programs and students enrolled in exploratory programs. The exploratory program enrollment would include classes such as typing or other one year classes. This category would also include the short term exploratory classes. Also report the number and percent of students completing vocational occupational preparatory programs. The percent of students completing vocational occupational preparatory programs should be based on the number eligible to complete. Report district data for the most current three year period.

Part II
Staff Data

Item 11 — Record the percent of attendance for teachers and all other professional staff as the aggregate days attendance divided by aggregate days membership. Actual contract days should be used as the basis for calculating percent attendance for teachers and administrators.

Item 12—Record by school and district the pupil/teacher ratio. Report school and district data for the number of classes with enrollment over the maximum class size (K = 28, 1 - 3 = 26, 4 - 6 = 30, 7 - 8 = 31, 9 - 12 = 35). Report by school and district the percent of students in classes over the maximum class size. When calculating pupil teacher ratio include all categories of teachers listed in Item 14 on the School Data Form. Do not include principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors, and librarians. Divide school enrollment obtained from the Superintendent's Annual Statistical Report by the FTE's obtained from the School Data Form.

Item 13 — Record the district teacher/administrator ratio. Report district salary data by rank; the percent of professional staff in each rank and the salary range for each rank. The administrator's salary data must be reported separately from the teacher's salary data. Include guidance counselors and librarians with the teacher category. Report the minimum and maximum salary that is actually paid, not the districts salary schedule. Administrator's include all certified central office personnel plus principals and assistant principals.

Item 14 — Record the number of teachers teaching out of field (an area in which the teacher does not have a major, minor or area of concentration; also includes teachers at grade levels for which they do not have certification). Report school and district data. (Note: Do not include teachers that were grandfathered in at the middle school level.)

Item 15 — Record the cost per professional staff member for inservice activities. Include only costs for the following: consultant fees and expenses; registration fees for conference; videotapes, films, filmstrips and audiotapes purchased for staff development; travel expenses for staff members; expenses for workshops conducted for staff; professional books purchased for staff; and expenses for local curriculum lab and local media center for staff.

Item 16 — Record all courses offered by the district which exceed the state required program of studies. The information included in this item may be limited to experimental courses, exemplary courses or courses that the district would like to highlight for the local public.

Part III
Management Data

Item 17 — Record district and state data for the following factors: cost per pupil for intruction; cost per pupil for administration; cost per pupil for current expenses, and cost per pupil for transportation.

Item 18 — Record the amount and percent of district revenue received from all sources. Report receipts from local sources to include tax receipts, income from investments and receipts from other sources. List district revenue from state and federal sources. Also report the general fund balance as of June 30 as a percent of total general fund money. State percentages must be shown for three line items only; revenue from local sources; revenue from state sources and revenue from federal sources.

Item 19 — Record the local revenue per child in average daily attendance and the assessed property value per child in average daily attendance. Report district and state data.

Part IV
Master Educational Improvement Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a brief executive summary of the Master Educational Improvement Plan. Include district goals and objectives and information outlining the progress of the district in addressing any deficiencies identified in the Master Educational Improvement Plan.

Statistical Tables
(Examples)

TABLE 1 - Percent of Students Mastering Essential Skills - DISTRICT

	SKILL AREA					NO. & % OF ENROLLMENT TAKING TESTS	
GRADE	READING	MATH	SPELLING	WRITING	REFER'CE	N	%
K							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

TABLE 2 - District Mean NCE Scores on Basic Skills - KEST

GRADE	READING	MATH	SPELLING	WRITING	REFER'CE	OBT-TOT BATTERY
3						
5						
7						
10						

TABLE 3 - SAT and ACT Scores

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST - SAT				
			NO. & % OF GRADUATES TAKING TEST	
GRADE	MATH	VERBAL	N	%
District				
State - 1986	519	483	3,791	9.2

AMERICAN COLLEGE BOARD TEST - ACT					
				NO. & % OF GRADUATES TAKING TEST	
GRADE	MATH	ENGLISH	COMPOSITE	N	%
District					
State - 1986	16.0	18.3	18.1	21,594	52.2

TABLE 4 - Percent of Students Retained in Each Grade

	GRADE												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Schools													
District													

TABLE 5 - DROPOUT RATE - Students Quitting School as a Percent of Enrollment by Grades

	1985		1986		1987	
GRADE	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
District						
State	12,921	4.36	10,863	3.75		

TABLE 6 - Percent Attendance - Students

	1985	1986	1987
Schools			
District			
State	94.44	94.30	

TABLE 7 - Graduates Going to College or Other Postsecondary Training

COLLEGE						
	1984		1985		1986	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
District						
State	17,351	43.8	17,463	45.3	17,539	46.4

OTHER POSTSECONDARY TRAINING						
	1984		1985		1986	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
District						
State	3,191	8.0	3,216	8.4	3,171	8.4

TABLE 8 - Special Education Enrollment as a Percent of Total Enrollment

	STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION					
	1985		1986		1987	
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
District						
State	75,355	11.7	77,465	12.0	70,304	10.9

	SPECIAL ED STUDENTS RETURNED TO REGULAR CLASSROOM STATUS AS A % OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT					
	1985		1986		1987	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
District						

TABLE 9 - Number and Percent of Enrollment Classified as Economically Deprived

GRADE	1985		1986		1987	
	NO	%	NO.	%	NO.	%
District						
State	223,188	34.6	224,251	34.4	N/A	

TABLE 10 - District Secondary Vocational Education Enrollment

	1985		1986		1987	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
Number and % of secondary students enrolled in vocational education: • Occupational prep. programs • Exploratory programs						
Number and % of secondary students completing vocational occupational preparatory programs						
NOTE: % based on eligible completers						

TABLE 11 - Percent Attendance - Professional Staff

TITLE	PERCENT
Teachers	
Administrators and other professional staff	
District	

TABLE 12 - District Pupil/Teacher Ratio

	RATIO	NO. CLASSES OVER MAX. SIZE	% STUDENTS IN CLASSES OVER MAX.
Schools			
District			

TABLE 13 - Teacher/Administrator Ratio and Salary Data

TEACHER / ADMINISTRATOR RATIO			
SALARY DATA - Teachers			
	Percent of Teachers	SALARY RANGE	
		Minimum	Maximum
Rank I Rank II Rank III			

SALARY DATA - Administrators			
	Percent of Administrators	SALARY RANGE	
		Minimum	Maximum
Rank I Rank II Rank III			

TABLE 14 - Classes Taught by Teacher Out of Field of Specialty

	NUMBER TEACHING OUT OF FIELD OF SPECIALTY	NUMBER OF CLASSES OUT OF FIELD
Schools		
District		

TABLE 15 - Cost of Professional Staff Development

	1985	1986	1987
Average cost per professional staff member for inservice activities			

TABLE 16 - Courses Exceeding State Program of Studies

List courses offered which exceed the state required program of studies

1
2
3

TABLE 17 - District Per Pupil Expenditures in ADA

FACTOR	DISTRICT	1986 STATE
Cost per Pupil for Instruction		$1,526
Cost per Pupil for Administration		84
Cost per Pupil for Current Expenses		2,139
Cost per Pupil for Transportation		188

TABLE 18 - Local School District Revenue

	DOLLARS $	PERCENT OF TOTAL	STATE AVERAGE 1986
INCOME			
Revenue from local sources			24.0
Tax Receipts			
Income from investments			
(% ____ average return)			
Other			
Revenue from State Sources			64.0
Revenue from Federal Sources			12.0
GENERAL FUND BALANCE (June 30, as a % of total General Fund Money)			

TABLE 19 - Revenue and Assessed Property Value Per Child

	DISTRICT	1986 STATE
Local revenue per child in average daily attendance		$616.00
Assessed property value per child in average daily attendance		$121,892

kentucky youth advocates, inc.

Kentucky Youth Advocates is grateful to the following supporters of our work:

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The Junior League of Lexington
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The findings and recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of current or foremer contributors.

KENTUCKY YOUTH ADVOCATES, INC.

Kentucky Youth Advocates operates as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization which serves the public independently. It researches, publishes, and distributes information about current and emerging policies affecting Kentucky's children, especially those who are poor or otherwise disadvantaged. KYA tries to make government agencies accountable to the needs of these children by providing information and analyses to both the public and private sectors. KYA functions as an independent analyst, critic, and problem solver. KYA listens to children, their families, and service providers who are reluctant or unable to raise questions about existing policy.

Kentucky Youth Advocates, organized in 1975 and incorporated in 1977, receives financial support from philanthropic foundations, corporations, and private individuals. KYA conducts government-funded studies with the right to publish the results. In addition, KYA sells publications and charges for consultant services.

Kentucky Youth Advocates has offices in Louisville and Frankfort.